

With Mr. Ashlip copy

BOROUGH OF WOKINGHAM.

URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, FOR THE YEAR 1893.

Pursuant to the Regulations of the Local Government Board.

TOWN HALL,

READING.

March, 1894.

To the Wokingham Urban Sanitary Authority,
Gentlemen,

I submit to you my Annual Report for the year ended December 31st, 1893.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The complete Report of the Census of 1891 having recently been published I am now able to record the age- and sex-distribution of the population of your district, and other particulars of interest concerning it.

The number of persons living within the district on the 6th April, 1891, was 3254, and consisted of 1539 males and 1715 females.

There were 1114 females to 1000 males, the proportion in the whole of Berkshire having been 1034 females to 1000 males, and in the whole of England and Wales 1064 females to 1000 males.

The following table shows the area in statute acres, the houses in 1891, the population and males and females in 1881 and 1891, and the number of persons estimated to be living at the middle of 1893, in the Wokingham Urban Sanitary District :—

Name of Locality.	Area in Statute Acres.	Houses.			Population.					
		Inhabited.	Uninhabited.	Building.	Persons.		Males.		Females.	
		1891.			1881.	1891.	1881.	1891.	1881.	1891.
Wokingham Urban Sanitary District.	*814	706	31	1	3099	3254	1465	1539	1634	1715
					Estimated to middle of 1893.					3290

* In the census of 1881 this number was 814, but in the census of 1891 it is given as 555.

The number and sex of the population in 1891 at several groups of ages are given in the next table:—

Age.	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1—	2—	3—	4—	Under 5 years.	5—	10—	15—	20—	25—	30—	35—
Males ...	1539	36	33	31	31	32	163	187	161	138	128	105	95	91
Females ...	1715	31	32	36	36	37	172	176	178	164	157	112	104	111
Persons	3254	67	65	67	67	69	335	363	339	302	285	217	199	202

Age.	40—	45—	50—	55—	60—	65—	70—	75—	80—	85—	90—	95—	100 and upwards.
Males ...	94	78	66	72	49	40	36	20	14	2	0	0	0
Females ...	103	88	87	64	64	43	45	26	14	6	0	1	0
Persons	197	166	153	136	113	83	81	46	28	8	0	1	0

The age- and sex-constitution of the population of England and Wales and of your district are compared below:—

			At all ages.	0 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 55.	55 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
Age-Distribution.	{ England and Wales ..		1000	123	228	193	352	57	47
	{ Wokingham Urban Sanitary District		1000	103	216	180	348	77	76
Sex-Distribution.	{ Wokingham Urban Sanitary District	{ Males ...	473	50	107	82	163	37	34
		{ Females ...	527	53	109	99	186	39	41
	{ England and Wales	{ Males ...	485	61	114	94	169	26	21
		{ Females ...	515	62	114	99	183	31	26

Inasmuch as the mortality between 5 and 55 years of age is lower than that for all ages an unusually large proportion of persons living at those ages in any community would tend to cause a low death rate, while that would be raised by an excess over the usual proportion living under 5 or over 55 years of age, because the mortality at those periods of life is above the rate for all ages. The death rate of females at nearly all ages is lower than the death rate of males ; so a larger proportion of females than usual in any district would also tend to lower the death rate, quite independently of any local conditions of site, climate, dwellings or occupations and habits of the people.

It is therefore necessary to make corrections for the age- and sex-distribution of the population of places before their death rates can be strictly compared. The general or crude death rate, which gives the proportion of deaths from all causes to each 1000 of the population, when applied to the same place from year to year is a safe indication of any change for better or worse in its health condition, because the age- and sex-constitution of populations are found to remain almost constant

when the prevailing industries and general class of the inhabitants have not changed. But when used for comparison with other places it may entirely lose its value as a test of the relative healthiness of the places compared, because the age- and sex-distribution of their populations may be altogether different.

In the Wokingham Urban Sanitary District in every 1000 of the population there are 20 less children under five years of age, 29 fewer persons between 5 and 55, 12 more persons at 55 years of age and upwards ; and 12 more females than in the whole of England and Wales.

There were 706 inhabited houses, 31 uninhabited and 1 building in your district when the census was taken. The average number of persons living in each house was 4·61, as against 4·79 at the census of 1881.

In the census of 1891 the number of all tenements with less than five rooms is given, in addition to the usual enumeration of houses ; but as no definition of the word "tenement" was given in the Census (England and Wales) Act, 1890, there appears to have been considerable variation in the application of the term in different parts of the country.

Without, therefore, placing too implicit reliance upon the accuracy of the figures relating to tenement-dwellings it will be useful, I think, to give those which were found in Wokingham.

While the inhabited *houses* numbered 706 there were 714 inhabited *tenements*. The number of tenements with less than five rooms was 268, and did not include any tenements of only one room. They amounted to 37·54 per cent. of the total number of tenements and were occupied by 1001 persons distributed as follows :—

Rooms in Tenements.	No. of Tenements with less than five Rooms.	Number of Occupants of Tenements.											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12 or more.
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2	32	11	14	3	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3	14	3	4	3	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4	222	17	46	47	29	29	22	10	14	5	3	...	...

This table shows that of the 268 tenements with less than five rooms 32 were tenements of two rooms, 14 of three rooms and 222 of four rooms ; and of the 32 tenements of two rooms 11 had one occupant each, 14 two occupants, 3 three occupants, and so forth for the remainder of the figures.

Sixty-four persons, or 1·97 per cent. of the population, were housed in tenements of two rooms ; 37 or 1·14 per cent. of the population in tenements of three rooms ; and 900, or 27·66 per cent. of the population in tenements of four rooms, whilst 2253 persons, or 69·24 per cent. of the population resided in tenements having five or more rooms.

The average number of occupants *per room* was 1·0 in two-roomed tenements, 0·88 in three-roomed tenements, and 1·01 in four-roomed tenements.

In endeavouring to form some kind of estimate of overcrowding that really exists in such tenements the Registrar-General considers that all in which there are more than two occupants per room should be deemed to be overcrowded.

Judged by that standard there were only eight tenements with less than five rooms which were overcrowded in your district. They were occupied by 75 persons, or 2·30 per cent. of the population, and the average number of persons per room in them was 2·34.

The overcrowded tenements are shown on the right of the continuous dark line in the preceding table.

The census affords us no data for calculating what overcrowding there may be in tenements with more than four rooms, but from my knowledge of the district I am of opinion that there is not much in it.

During the year 46 persons were married ; 33 males and 42 females were born ; and 38 males and 26 females died in your district.

To these numbers must be added the deaths of one male in Moultsford Lunatic Asylum and one female in the Royal Berkshire Hospital at Reading which occurred to persons who had been admitted into those institutions from Wokingham ; whilst from them must be deducted 10 persons who were married but did not reside within the district, the births of 4 males and 2 females, and the deaths of 4 males and 1 female which took place in the workhouse amongst persons who had been admitted from the Wokingham Rural Sanitary District.

The corrected numbers were, therefore 36 persons married ; 69 births, including 29 males and 40 females ; and 61 deaths, of which 35 happened to males and 26 to females.

There were 10·94 persons married to every 1000 living, which was 1 per 1000 below the average of the five years preceding.

The birth rate was 20·97 per 1000 of the population, which was 1·80 below the average of the six years preceding.

The death rate at all ages was 18·54 per 1000 persons living, and was 1·85 above the six years' average.

Of the corrected number of deaths 10 occurred under five years of age, 1 at five and under fifteen, 3 at fifteen and under twenty-five, 14 at twenty-five and under fifty-five, 11 at fifty-five and under sixty-five, and 22 at sixty-five and upwards.

In the following table are shown under these age-groups the number of males, females and persons estimated to be living at the middle of 1893, the deaths at each age-group, and the deaths per 1000 living at each age-group, such deaths being strictly comparable with similar rates in all places, and needing no correction like crude death rate :—

Ages.							
	All ages.	0 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 55	55 and under 65	65 and upwards.
Numbers living at each Age-Group estimated to the middle of 1893.							
Males ...	1556	165	352	269	535	122	113
Females ...	1734	174	358	324	612	129	137
Persons ...	3290	339	710	593	1147	251	250
Deaths at each Age-Group.							
Males ...	35	4	1	2	11	7	10
Females ...	26	6	0	1	3	4	12
Persons ...	61	10	1	3	14	11	22
Deaths to 1000 living at each Age-Group.							
Males ...	22·49	24·24	2·84	7·43	20·56	57·38	88·50
Females ...	14·99	34·48	0·00	3·09	4·90	31·01	87·59
Persons ...	18·54	29·50	1·41	5·06	12·21	43·82	88·00

The mortality under one year of age is best stated in terms of deaths to every 1000 births registered, instead of each 1000 living at that age, because the enumeration of infants under one at censuses cannot be relied upon as accurate, the number being understated, owing to inaccurate returns, many in their first year being given as one year old. Dr. Farr attributed this deficiency to confusion between the current year of age and the completed years of life, and not to actual omissions.

The deaths of children under one year of age numbered 9, and were 130·4 per 1000 of registered births. This represents the “infantile mortality.”

The number of deaths of infants under one year of age from certain groups of diseases, and the proportion of them to 1000 births are set forth below :—

Infants under One.	Deaths.	Deaths per 1,000 of Births.
1. Wasting Diseases ...	1	14·49
2. Convulsive Diseases ...	2	28·98
3. Diarrhœal Diseases ...	2	28·98
4. Pulmonary Diseases ...	1	14·49

Principal Zymotic Diseases

1. Includes marasmus, atrophy, debility, asthenia, want of breast milk, and premature birth.
2. Includes hydrocephalus, infantile meningitis, convulsions, and teething.
3. Includes diarrhœa, gastro-enteritis, intestinal catarrh, &c.
4. Includes bronchitis, pneumonia, and pleurisy.

In the accompanying table, prescribed by the Local Government Board, the births and the deaths classified according to ages, diseases and localities are enumerated :—

Table of Births and Deaths during the Year 1893, in the Urban Sanitary District of Wokingham.

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics: public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Mortality from all causes, at subjoined Ages.								Mortality from n subjoined Causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under Five Years of Age.																	Total.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																														
	Registered Births.	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	Small-pox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Typhus.	FEVERS.								Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Relapsing.		Puerperal.	Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Rheumatic Fever.	Ague.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Injuries.	All other Diseases.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	

The deaths included 1 from scarlet fever, 2 from measles, and 1 from diarrhœa ; so 4 deaths were due to the principal zymotic diseases. This was at the rate of 1·22 per 1000 of the population, and was 0·35 per 1000 above the average of the six years preceding.

The next table, relating to the past seven years, enumerates the

DEATHS FROM THE PRINCIPAL ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

YEAR.	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	1893
Small Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Diphtheria	1	1	3	1	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Fevers of a continued character } Typhus ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diarrhœa and Dysentery ...	1	0	0	0	2	1	1
Total Deaths from the above } principal Zymotic Diseases }	2	1	3	1	8	2	4
Death rate per 1,000	0·62	0·31	0·93	0·31	2·45	0·61	1·22

Phthisis, or consumption, caused 3 deaths, which was at the rate of 0·91 per 1000 persons living, and just below the six years' average of 0·93.

Pulmonary diseases, other than phthisis, caused 11 deaths, or 3·34 per 1000 ; this was 0·51 above the average of the six years preceding.

Diseases of the heart were the cause of 3 deaths. This was at the rate of 0·91 per 1000, and 0·48 below the average.

Two deaths, or 0·61 per 1000 persons living, were due to cancerous diseases ; this was 0·16 above the average.

The subjoined table records the mortality per 1,000 persons living, from consumption, pulmonary diseases, heart diseases, and cancerous diseases, in 1893 and the six years preceding :—

Disease.	1887	1888	1889	1890	1891	1892	Average of six years.	1893
Phthisis	1·59	0·93	0·93	0·31	0·61	1·22	0·93	0·91
Bronchitis	2·19	3·11	0·00	3·39	4·60	3·66	2·83	3·34
Pncumonia								
Pleurisy								
Diseases of the Heart ...	1·25	0·62	1·86	1·85	1·53	1·22	1·39	0·91
Cancerous Diseases ...	0·31	0·31	0·31	0·62	0·61	0·61	0·46	0·61

The deaths due to violence numbered 2, and included one suicide. They were at the rate of 0·61 per 1,000 of the population.

The annexed table sets forth the statistics relating to the borough for the past seven years :—

Year.	Population estimated to 30th June.	BIRTHS.			DEATHS.								Marriage rate per 1,000 living.	Birth rate per 1,000 living.	Death rate per 1,000 living.	Zymotic death rate per 1,000 living.	Deaths of Children under 1 year per 1,000 births.
		All registered in Borough.	Due to other Districts.	Due to Borough.	All registered in Borough.	Occurred outside, but due to Borough.	Due to other Districts.	Due to Borough.	Under 1 year.	Under 5 years.	Over 5 years.	In Workhouse.					
1893	3,290	75	6	69	64	2	5	61	9	10	51	11	10·9	20·9	18·5	1·22	130·4
1892	3,275	81	2	79	65	3	17	51	6	6	45	24	14·7	24·1	15·6	0·61	75·9
1891	3,259	94	3	91	75	3	18	60	10	19	41	32	12·3	27·9	18·4	2·45	109·9
1890	3,242	64	3	61	82	2	12	72	9	10	62	21	11·4	18·8	22·2	0·31	147·5
1889	3,226	76	0	76	50	1	7	44	7	15	29	11	12·1	23·6	13·9	0·93	92·1
1888	3,211	68	2	66	52	2	4	50	4	6	44	11	9·2	20·6	15·6	0·31	60·6
1887	3,195	74	5	69	50	3	7	46	6	8	38	9	...	21·6	14·4	0·62	87·0

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The cases of infectious diseases which were notified during the year are classified below :—

Locality.	Aged under 5, or over 5.	Small Pox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup	FEVERS.					Cholera.	Erysipelas.
						Typhus.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Relapsing.	Puerperal.		
Borough of Wokingham {	Under 5 ...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 upwards	3	14	1	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...
(H.) Workhouse ... {	Under 5 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ... {	Under 5 ...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	5 upwards	3	14	1	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...

(H) signifies that an isolation hospital is situated on the workhouse premises.

The fees paid for the notification certificates during the year amounted to £2 2s. 6d.

Small Pox.—In January a vagrant in the tramp wards at the workhouse fell ill with small pox, and was placed in the isolation hospital belonging to that institution. He had never been vaccinated, and suffered from a severe attack of the disease, but recovered.

In May there were two cases of very modified small pox, one was a man who was removed to the workhouse isolation hospital, the other was a youth who was treated in a private house. Both patients had been vaccinated and recovered.

Scarlet Fever.—In May there were seven cases of scarlet fever in one house, and two in another. In June there was a third case in the last-named house, and four cases in two other houses. In October there were two cases in two houses.

Altogether there were sixteen cases in six houses. They all recovered, but one death was certified to have been caused by scarlet fever in May, though the case had not been notified because the patient who had suffered from the disease while at school in another place had virtually recovered from the fever but died from its after effects.

Diphtheria was notified in only one instance ; the patient was a girl whose father keeps a cow, but he discontinued selling any butter or milk until she had recovered and the house was free from infection.

Enteric or Typhoid Fever.—I received four notifications of typhoid fever ; all the patients recovered. The first was a young man who had only just come into the town when he was taken ill in July. He suffered from a second attack of the disease in December. The second case happened in August in a house where there was some defective drainage. This patient was removed to the Royal Berkshire Hospital at Reading. The other patient was a visitor who appeared to have contracted her illness before she arrived.

Measles was rather prevalent in September and October, but as it is not a notifiable disease I am unable to give the number of cases. It caused the death of two children, one aged eight months, in October, the other aged three years, in November.

Diarrhœa caused only one death, that of an infant aged eleven months, in September. I did not hear of this disease being prevalent during any part of the year.

Influenza was not epidemic, but there were a few cases and it caused the death of a male aged 59, in April, and another aged 18, in May.

Where infectious disease existed the usual routine for endeavouring to prevent the spread of infection was followed, the infected houses were disinfected and all children living in them were excluded from attendance at school. It was not found necessary to close any of the schools.

GENERAL.

The Slaughter Houses were inspected and found to be generally kept clean.

The Bakehouses did not give rise to any cause of complaint.

The Dairies and Cow-sheds were kept under observation, and in most instances the requirements of the Dairies, Cow-sheds and Milk-shops Order of 1885 were found to be complied with. One registered person discontinued keeping cows, so there are now six persons on the register.

The Water Supply of the Wokingham District Water Company was laid on to 38 fresh premises, making a total of 979 supplied. Of the premises supplied with the water 495 are situated within the borough, 9 fresh supplies having been laid on in that part of the Company's area.

New Buildings.—Sixteen plans under the bye-laws relating to new buildings were submitted to you and approved. They related to nine new houses, one stabling, one workshop, one shed, and alterations or additions to eleven old buildings.

Dilapidated and Overcrowded Houses.—The houses in Chubb's Row, Rose Street, which were in a bad state, came into the possession of a new owner and were improved. The overcrowding which existed in three of them was abated.

I made a representation to you under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, that No. 40, Rose Street, was in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, and you gave notice to the owner to put it in a fit state for habitation. The time allowed in the notice had not expired at the end of the year. There was subsequently considerable delay in doing the work, and you decided to take proceedings against the owner, but that was not necessary as he obtained an ejectment order against his tenant and put the house into a habitable condition this year. The house had been overcrowded, but it is not so now.

Sewage Farms.—A considerable improvement in the treatment of the sewage has been effected by underdraining and bringing into use for irrigation some additional land, about one acre at Buck's Copse, and 1 acre 1 rood and 24 poles at Ashridge farm.

Inspection.—I visited your district systematically, and at intervals as occasion required; and brought to your notice any matters which required your attention.

The following is a detailed account of the cases which were dealt with by your inspector during the year :—

Foul cesspools cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Nuisances from sinks, &c., abated	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
Foul accumulations removed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Animals improperly kept removed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Dilapidated house repaired and cleansed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Houses disinfected	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
								—
Total								63
								—

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

ALFRED ASHBY,

Medical Officer of Health.

